

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACI IMMEDIATE 3927

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 GENEVA 9566

NODIS

FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FROM REINHARDT

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH UK

SUBJ: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: TALKING POINTS FOR CHONA

1. I HAVE DISCUSSED THE STATE OF THE PLAY IN GENEVA
WITH FRANK WISNER AND HAVE READ THE TALKING POINTS
WHICH HE PREPARED FOR MY USE WITH MARK CHONA.

2. MY CONVERSATIONS WITH KAUNDA AND NYERERE AND THE
TALKS HERE WITH CHONA INDICATE THAT THE FRONT LINE
STATES ARE DIGGING IN BEHIND THE PATRIOTIC FRONT
AND ARE REJECTING ANY REASONABLE CONCEPT OF POWER
SHARING DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD. CHONA HAS ASKED
THAT WE REPLY TO HIS PROPOSALS. TIMING IS IMPORTANT
AND I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD TELL CHONA AND SALIM,
WHEN HE RETURNS, THAT WE CANNOT BACK OR SELL AN
ARRANGEMENT WHICH DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR REASONABLE
POWER SHARING. THE LAST TWO PARAGRAPHS OF THE TALKING
POINTS PRESENT THIS ARGUMENT AND SHOULD MAKE CLEAR TO
THE PRESIDENTS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES THAT WE WILL
NOT GO ALONG WITH THE FRAMEWORK WHICH THE PATRIOTIC
FRONT IS PRESENTING TO THE BRITISH AND THE OTHER GENEVA
PARTIES.

3. I AWAITS ANY MODIFICATIONS YOU WISH TO MAKE BEFORE
I CALL ON THE OBSERVERS.

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BEGIN TALKING POINTS

I HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH WASHINGTON SINCE YOUR MEETINGS
WITH FRANK ON MONDAY AND TUESDAY, AND THE POINTS I AM ABOUT TO
MAKE REFLECT WASHINGTON'S VIEWS AS WELL AS MY OWN.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER WHAT THE EXERCISE WE ARE
ENGAGED IN HERE IS ALL ABOUT. WE ARE HERE TO TRY TO REACH A
SETTLEMENT THAT TRANSFERS POWER IN RHODESIA FROM THE HANDS
OF WHITES WHO NOW HOLD IT TO AFRICANS WHO RIGHTFULLY
DESERVE IT.

WE ARE HERE TO GET A SOLUTION THAT OFFERS THE BEST
ASSURANCE OF A SMOOTH TRANSITION TO A MODERATE AND RES-
PONSIBLE GOVERNMENT, ONE THAT CAN BRING STABILITY AND
PROSPERITY TO ZIMBABWE, AND ONE THAT WOULD NOT POSE A
THREAT TO THE STABILITY OF ITS NEIGHBORS, MOST NOTABLY
ZAMBIA.

WE ARE DISTURBED BY WHAT WE PERCEIVE TO BE A GROWING
SENSE OF UNREALITY HERE IN GENEVA, NOT ONLY AMONG SOME
OF THE NATIONALIST DELEGATIONS, BUT ALSO AMONG THE
OBSERVERS.

SOMEHOW, THERE APPEARS AN INCREASING TENDENCY TO IGNORE
SOME OF THE FUNDAMENTAL REALITIES OF THE RHODESIAN
SITUATION:

THE FIRST OF THESE REALITIES IS THAT IAN SMITH AND
THE RHODESIA FRONT HOLD DE FACTO POWER IN RHODESIA,
NOT THE SOUTH AFRICANS, NOT THE BRITISH, AND CERTAINLY
NOT THE UNITED STATES. NO MATTER HOW MUCH WE MAY DISLIKE
THAT SITUATION, IT IS NOT SOMETHING THAT CAN BE
WISHED AWAY.

SECOND, THERE ARE LIMITATIONS ON THE DEGREE OF
INFLUENCE THAT EXTERNAL POWERS CAN EFFECTIVELY EXERCISE
IN TRYING TO BRING SMITH TO ACCEPT A SETTLEMENT WHICH
EFFECTIVELY GUARANTEES HIS OWN DEMISE. IN LARGE MEASURE
THOSE LIMITS ARE DETERMINED BY DOMESTIC POLITICAL

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REALITIES IN BRITAIN, IN SOUTH AFRICA AND IN THE U.S.
WHICH MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO SELL AT HOME OR TO PRESS
UPON SMITH ANY SETTLEMENT TERMS WHICH DO NOT PROVIDE
DUE ASSURANCES FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF MINORITY INTERESTS
IN RHODESIA.

THE THIRD POINT CONCERNSS THOSE UNDERSTANDINGS WHICH
PERSUADED SMITH TO ACCEPT, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS 12

YEARS IN POWER, THE PRINCIPLE OF MAJORITY RULE AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THAT PRINCIPLE WITHIN A FIXED TIME FRAME. WHATEVER ONE CHOOSES TO SAY ABOUT THE FIVE POINTS OF SMITH'S SEPTEMBER 24 SPEECH, AND PARTICULARLY POINT 3, THERE CAN BE NO DISAGREEMENT OVER THE FACT THAT IT WAS ON THIS BASIS, AND THIS BASIS ALONE, THAT SMITH WAS PERSUADED TO ACCEPT THE CONCEPT OF MAJORITY RULE. NOR CAN THERE BE ANY ARGUMENT OVER THE FACT THAT THE CONCEPT THAT UNDERLIES THE FIVE POINTS AND THAT MADE POSSIBLE SMITH'S ACCEPTANCE OF THEM - AS WELL AS THAT OF HIS PARTY - IS THE CONCEPT THAT RHODESIAN WHITES WOULD BE ASSURED OF A MEANINGFUL VOICE AND ROLE IN THE POLITICAL DECISIONS IN THE TRANSITION PERIOD THAT WILL AFFECT THEIR FUTURE IN ZIMBABWE.

WE HAVE HEARD THE VIEW EXPRESSED BY SEVERAL PERSONS HERE IN GENEVA THAT SMITH AND THE RHODESIA FRONT MAY NOW BE READY TO ABANDON THE CONCEPT OF SHARED POWER IN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT IN EXCHANGE FOR VAGUE AND AMBIGUOUS PROMISES OR UNDERSTANDINGS. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD IT SAID THAT THE UNITED STATES CAN DELIVER SMITH UPON DEMAND AND GET HIM TO ACCEPT ANY ALTERNATIVE SET OF PROPOSALS THAT MIGHT BE PUT FORWARD AT THE CONFERENCE. WITH REGARD TO THE FIRST POINT, NOTHING SMITH HAS SAID OR IMPLIED SINCE THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE OFFERS ANY SUGGESTION THAT HE IS PREPARED TO ABANDON THE CONCEPT THAT RHODESIA WHITES MUST HAVE EFFECTIVE AND CLEARLY DEFINED POWERS WITHIN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. WITH REGARD TO THE SECOND, ANYONE WHO THINKS THAT WE CAN PERSUADE OR COERCE SMITH INTO ACCEPTING A SETTLEMENT ON ANY OTHER TERMS FAILS TO UNDERSTAND THE REAL LIMITATIONS OF AMERICAN POWER.

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WE MUST BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO MISINTERPRET WHAT SMITH IS SAYING OR TO READ INTO HIS STATEMENTS AND THOSE OF HIS RETINUE ONLY WHAT WE WANT TO HEAR.

OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT SMITH AND THE RHODESIANS ARE FULLY PREPARED TO FIGHT ON AND TO RESIST ALL FORMS OF PRESSURE IF THEY DO NOT GET THE KIND OF SETTLEMENT HERE THAT THEY FEEL MEETS THEIR MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS. THEY HAVE NOT BEEN UNSECESSFUL IN THIS RESPECT. THEIR RECENT RAIDS INTO MOZAMBIQUE HAVE RESTORED SOME OF THEIR CONFIDENCE. THEY ARE CONVINCED THAT THEY HAVE DEALT SERIOUS BLOWS TO THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS AND THAT THEY CAN CONTINUE TO DO SO FOR A LONG TIME TO COME.

MOREOVER, THE RHODESIANS SENSE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A

SHIFT IN WORLD OPINION ABOUT THEIR SITUATION SINCE THE NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN. BY REPEATING HIS READINESS TO NEGOTIATE A SETTLEMENT HE HAS ATTEMPTED TO PROJECT AN IMAGE OF REASONABLENESS, AND THE NATIONALIST DELEGATIONS HERE HAVE PLAYED INTO HIS HANDS BY APPEARING TO DEMAND NOT NEGOTIATION BUT UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER. WE ARE ESPECIALLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE VERY EVIDENT EROSION OF SUPPORT IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR A SETTLEMENT, WHICH COULD TIE VORSTER'S HANDS AND PREVENT HIM FROM CONTINUING HIS POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION NOT ONLY WITH RESPECT TO ZIMBABWE BUT ALSO NAMIBIA.

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3928

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 GENEVA 9566

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FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY FROM REINHARDT

THOSE OF US WHO BEAR A HEAVY BURDEN OF RESPONSIBILITY TO OUR RESPECTIVE NATIONS CANNOT AFFORD TO BE ROMANTIC OR SENTIMENTAL ABOUT WAR. IF WE FAIL TO GET A SETTLEMENT HERE, IT IS NOT THE UNITED STATES THAT WILL SUFFER MOST DIRECTLY FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF THAT FAILURE. THOSE WHO WILL SUFFER MOST WILL BE THE ZIMBABWEANS, WHO FACE THE PROSPECT OF HAVING A WHOLE GENERATION OF YOUTH CHEWED UP IN NEEDLESS BLOODSHED, AND WHOSE ONLY REWARD WILL BE A COUNTRY RAVAGED BY WAR AND DESTRUCTION.

RHODESIA'S NEIGHBORS, ZAMBIA IN PARTICULAR, WOULD PAY A HEAVY PRICE IF THE WAR IS ALLOWED TO DRAY ON, AND NOT MERELY IN ECONOMIC TERMS. ZAMBIA ALREADY KNOWS WHAT IT MEANS TO HAVE FOREIGN ARMIES LIVING IN ARMED CAMPS ON ITS SOIL AND HOW DIFFICULT IT CAN BE TO CONTROL THEM. THE

LEBANESE EXPERIENCE STANDS AS AN EXAMPLE TO ALL OF HOW DISRUPTIVE A FORCE THESE ARMIES CAN BECOME.

YOU MUST ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT IF CONTINUING VIOLENCE LEADS TO FOREIGN INTERVENTION, THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT STAND IDLY BY.

WE CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERN OF ZIPA AND YOUR DESIRE NOT TO PROVIDE THOSE WHO WISH TO SEE THE CONFERENCE FAIL WITH THE EXCUSE THEY ARE LOOKING FOR. BUT WE FAIL TO COMPREHEND HOW ZAMBIA'S INTERESTS, OR ZIMBABWE'S EITHER,

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WOULD BE SERVED BY A SOLUTION THAT MERELY PLACES POWER IN THE HANDS OF THE MILITANTS WITHOUT IMPOSING ANY DISCIPLINE OR RESTRAINT ON THE EXERCISE OF THAT POWER.

NOR DO WE UNDERSTAND THE ARGUMENT FOR GIVING INTO ZIPA'S DEMAND FOR INSTANT MAJORITY RULE, WHICH SEEMS TO US TO BE CONTRARY TO ZAMBIA'S OWN INTERESTS, AND WHICH WILL ALSO DESTROY ANY CHANCE OF GETTING A SETTLEMENT.

ONE CANNOT TALK ABOUT NEGOTIATION UNLESS ONE TALKS OF COMPROMISE. SIMILARLY, TRANSITION MEANS JUST THAT, NOT AN INSTANTANEOUS AND TOTAL REVERSAL OF EXISTING POWER RELATIONSHIPS. OBVIOUSLY SMITH WILL HAVE MORE POWER AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TRANSITION THAN AT THE END.

THE UNITED STATES IS NOT PREPARED TO LIVE WITH ANY SOLUTION THAT DOES NOT RESULT IN THE EFFECTIVE TRANSFER TO THE AFRICAN MAJORITY BY THE END OF THE INTERIM PERIOD. FOR A SOLUTION TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO US, IT MUST ALSO BE A SOLUTION THAT IN 9-15 MONTHS CAN BE SUPPORTED BY THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS AND SOLD TO THE OAU. IN OTHER WORDS, ZIMBABWE'S VICTORY IS ASSURED, AND ANY TALK TO A SECOND UDI IS BASELESS AND ABSURD. WE WILL OPPOSE ANY MOVE SHARPLY AND CAN COUNT ON SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPORT IN THIS REGARD.

HOWEVER FLAWED THE INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS OUTLINED IN THE FIVE POINTS MAY APPEAR, WE MUST REMEMBER THAT THEY WERE THE BASIS ON WHICH SMITH WAS HOOKED INTO THE PROCESS OF SURRENDERING HIS OWN POSITION AND POWER. HIS ONLY CONDITION WAS AND REMAINS THAT WHITES MUST SHARE POWER DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT SMITH REALLY WANTS OR EXPECTS, BUT WE MUST ASSUME THAT HE WANTS ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS IN THE FORM OF CHECKS AND BALANCES THAT WILL GIVE HIM THE ABILITY TO LIMIT WHAT WHITES FEAR MOST ABOUT THE TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE. AND WE MUST ALSO ASSUME THAT IN THE

ABSENCE OF SUCH CLEARLY DEFINED AND INSTITUTIONALIZED SAFEGUARDS, SMITH CANNOT HOPE TO SELL A SETTLEMENT TO HIS OWN CONSTITUENTS IN RHODESIA.

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THE NAME OF THE GAME IS TO KEEP HIM HOOKED AND NOT MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO WIGGLE OFF.

THERE IS A LOT THE BRITISH CAN DO TO MAKE THE STRUCTURE OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT FUNCTION MORE SMOOTHLY AND EFFECTIVELY. WE BELIEVE THEY ARE PREPARED TO PLAY A ROLE, AND WE ARE PREPARED TO PUSH THEM IN THAT DIRECTION. BUT WE CANNOT EXPECT THE BRITISH TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITIES IN RHODESIA THAT THEY HAVE NEVER HAD AND FOR WHICH THEY LACK THE AUTHORITY TO BACK THEM UP. THEY ARE WILLING TO BRIDGE THE GAP, BUT YOU MUST BE VERY PRECISE AND VERY REALISTIC ABOUT WHAT YOU EXPECT OF THEM. THEY CAN PROVIDE THE ADDITIONAL MARGIN OF ASSURANCE FOR BOTH SIDES; BUT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, THE BRITISH ROLE CANNOT TAKE THE PLACE OF A BASIC AGREEMENT AMONG THE PARTIES THEMSELVES WHICH DEFINES IN CLEAR AND UNAMBIGUOUS TERMS THE POWERS THAT EACH WILL EXERCISE IN THE INTERIM PERIOD. BRITAIN CANNOT BE USED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR A RHODESIAN PRESENCE IN INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS. IN THE LONG TERM, ONLY AN AGREEMENT SUCH AS THIS-NOT AMBIGUOUS PROMISES OR UNDERSTANDINGS-CAN PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR PEACE AND STABILITY IN ZIMBABWE.

THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF OUR COMMON EFFORT TO FIND A SETTLEMENT, NO NATION HAS HAD CLEARER VISION THAN ZAMBIA. NO NATION ATTACHES GREATER IMPORTANCE TO A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME, ONE THAT BRINGS A MODERATE, PRAGMATIC AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT TO ZIMBABWE. WE BELIEVE THAT OTHER NATIONS WILL RECOGNIZE AND ACCEPT THE FACT THAT ZAMBIA FACES GREATER RISKS THAN ANYONE ELSE IF OUR EFFORTS FAIL; AND AS A RESULT, WE BELIEVE THAT YOUR WORD WILL BE HEEDED AND ACCEPTED BY THE OTHER FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS AND BY AFRICAN LEADERS GENERALLY. IT IS UP TO ZAMBIA, BEING CLOSEST TO THE PROBLEM, TO REMIND THE OTHERS OF HOW DANGEROUS THE SITUATION CAN BECOME IF A SETTLEMENT BASED ON COMPROMISE IS NOT ACHIEVED.

IT IS IMPORTANT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TO RETHINK ITS POSITION AND NEGOTIATE PROPOSALS WHICH PROVIDE FOR POWER SHARING WITH RHODESIAN EUROPEANS DURING THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION.

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THE UNITED STATES CANNOT SELL TO SMITH OR TO THE
SOUTH AFRICANS A SET OF PROPOSALS WHICH DOES NOT PRO-
VIDE FOR REASONABLE POWER SHARING DURING THE TRANSITIONAL
PERIOD.

THE FRAMEWORK WHICH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT APPEARS TO BE
ADVANCING DOES NOT MEET THIS CRITERIA AND CANNOT,
THEREFORE, ENJOY OUR SUPPORT.

END TALKING POINTS.CATTO

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